

## Commission seeks undeveloped land

# Conservation commission in the market for open space

By John Chaffee  
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**DUXBURY** — For the first time in 10 years, the conservation commission is actively seeking to obtain undeveloped land.

One lot has been bought and at least four more are under consideration, Conservation Administrator Joseph Grady said.

A townwide survey in late 1995 showed that voters wanted the town to limit residential growth and conserve more land.

A land acquisition proposal on the Oct. 14 special town meeting probably will not be acted upon. It calls for buying the 26-acre Delano property in North Duxbury for \$750,000.

This week, the conservation commission

## Duxbury

recommended to the selectmen that the article be indefinitely postponed.

"Although this land meets some of our open space values and would be a desirable piece to acquire, the conservation commission cannot support the purchase of this parcel at this price at this time," the commission said in a letter to the selectmen.

"We're not giving up on it entirely," Grady

said. "We're just putting off acting on it."

Although part of the Delano property is under state forest management protection, there is a legal dispute about whether the town was given proper notice to exercise its right to match the developer's offer for the land.

Nora and Martin Delano, who own the property, have an agreement with a developer to develop the 26 acres and an adjacent 6 acres into an 18-lot cluster-type subdivision. The assessed market value of two parcels is \$412,000.

There is no public access to the two parcels, and the developer will have "an enormous number of hurdles to overcome to develop the property," Grady said.

"It's backland," he said. "There's no frontage."

Three weeks ago, the conservation commission completed the purchase of more than 5 acres of wooded upland next to the 125-acre Waiting Hill Preserve near the North Hill Marsh in central Duxbury.

"That was the first major step forward in purchasing conservation land in the past 10 years," Grady said.

The \$20,000 the town paid for the so-called Wadsworth land came from a \$100,000 conser

## ■ LAND

Continued from Page 13

vation fund the commission can use to buy land as it becomes available.

More expensive purchases require town meeting action, Grady said.

One such purchase may be 50 acres of upland along Franklin Street, part of the 613-acre Camp Wing property in northwest Duxbury.

The owner of Camp Wing, the Boys and Girls Clubs of Boston, wants to sell a potentially developable portion of the camp to raise money but have authorized the conservation commission to hire an appraiser to help determine its market value.

"We're very interested in the Camp Wing property," Grady said.

He said the appraisal is scheduled to be completed by Nov. 14.

"Our goal is to try to have something to present to the annual town meeting in March," Grady said.

"We've had discussions about Camp Wing with numerous state agencies," he said. State officials

have said up to \$30 million could be made available to help South Shore communities buy land.

"We're really poised nicely, we believe, to put something together for the annual town meeting and to secure some state grant money to assist the town in buying the property," Grady said.

Other properties the conservation commission is interested in obtaining for the town include:

- 4.7 acres next to the recently purchased Wadsworth land.
- 6 acres of salt marsh on the Back River in northeast Duxbury.
- Part of the Bay Circuit Trail along the border of the proposed Lewis Farm subdivision in West Duxbury. Grady said the developer has offered to deed the trail to the town in exchange for allowing storm water from the subdivision to overflow onto adjacent conservation land.

There is a chance that the town will seek to buy the entire 17-acre Lewis Farm, Grady said.

Please see LAND — Page 14